40th day after death, at Easter, Whitsuntide, and on St. Dimi- 765
try's day) special dishes are eaten.

The course of the year in Ukraine is accompanied by 796 ●
many old customs which are not to be found among Russians but which resemble those of Southern Slavonic peoples. They spring from the world of Pontium and Greece and Rome; such are the festivals at Christmas ("koljada"), New Year ("novyj rik"), the consecration of water ("shtshedryj vetshir"), Easter ("hayivky"), the beginning of spring ("vesnyanky"), solstice ("kupalo"), the beginning of autumn ("Andrija") etc. They are accompanied by games and country dances, of which there are several thousand. The beginning of the most important agricultural operations is also celebrated (building the house, ploughing, sowing, driving the cows to pasture, hay and grain harvest etc).

Ukrainian demonology, founded on ancient animistic beliefs, 771
has, in contrast to the Russian, lost all its terrors; the devil, for instance, is stripped of all horror. Magic and the belief in witchcraft are very probably of more modern, partly Christian origin. There is no higher mythology. The worship of fire and water is more developed and there are some faint traces of the worship of plants. Much of popular belief is preserved in fairy 538
tales, fables, sagas, legends, proverbs and riddles, of which there is an inexhaustible store. Some 4 years ago Savtshenko found 2000 main variants of Ukrainian fairy tales, compared with about 1700 Russian and 1500 White Ruthenian versions. V. Hnatjuk has counted 327 fables of animals (exclusive of variants). We must finally mention the incredible wealth of popular stories and anecdotes.

But the Ukrainian people's most precious spiritual possession is their folk-poetry, one of the richest in Europe and characterised by aesthetic values, depth of poetic feeling and perfection of form. F. v. Bodenstedt, who published "Die poetische Ukraine" in 1843 put these Ukrainian poems above those of all other nations. Hohol said of them that they comprehended poetry and history and were a monument to the nation's ancestors. Every kind of song is represented, from the traditional songs of ritual and later ballads to the short song of to-day ("Shumky", "Kozatshky", "Kolomyjky" and "Tshabarashky"). These histo-